

REMARKS

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The examiner has rejected claims 28-43 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over WO 91/05014 (the Sutherland Patent). The Sutherland patent discloses 1) a block copolymer; 2) at least 300 parts by weight of an extender liquid per 100 parts by weight of the said copolymer(s); and 3) at least 50 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of the copolymer or a plasticizer-stabilizing additive (See Sutherland Patent, page 3). The cited reference teaches use of a mineral oil as the extender liquid (See Disclosure, page 10). The Sutherland patent discloses the use of "Fina Vestan," "Drakeol 34," and "Witco 380PO," all of which are trade names for various types of mineral oil (See Disclosure, page 10).

The instant invention does not require the use of mineral oil. Because the cited reference teaches away from the instant invention, that is, the cited reference teaches the use of mineral oil as an extender liquid, the instant invention cannot be deemed obvious over the cited reference. (See claim 28 of the instant invention: ". . . wherein the gel composition is substantially free of mineral oils.").

For at least these reasons among others, the Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims should be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve any other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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